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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 05/12/09

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ARTICLES:

(1) Ruling bloc loses "criticism card" with Ozawa's resignation: DPJ presidential election needs to be watched; Early Diet dissolution difficult?

MAINICHI (page 2) (Full)
May 12, 2009

Hirohiko Sakaguchi, Ryuko Tadokoro

With Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa's announcement of his resignation, the government and the ruling bloc's strategy for the dissolution of the Diet, premised on Ozawa's continuing to serve as DPJ chief, is becoming disrupted. Prime Minister Taro Aso, who has been on the offensive since the arrest of Ozawa's secretary, had been hoping to keep a complete free hand in determining the timing of Diet dissolution. But now, he will have to see how the election of the new DPJ president turns out. Some people in the government and the ruling parties are beginning to think that unless there is upheaval in the DPJ - caused by the intensification of internal strife, for instance - early dissolution will be difficult.

At an executive meeting of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) on May 11, Aso said: "Regardless of whether Mr. Ozawa resigns or not, the most important thing is to implement economic measures without fail. I would like to enact the supplementary budget as soon as possible," stressing his intention to pass the FY09 supplementary budget and the related legislations at an early date. However, his plan to gain

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a free hand in dissolving the Diet anytime after the enactment of the supplementary budget has now been upset by Ozawa's announcement of his resignation.

The prime minister gained a psychological advantage over Ozawa with the arrest of the latter's secretary. Since then, the government and the ruling bloc had been criticizing the DPJ for Ozawa's holding on to the party's presidency, and had been working on restoring the cabinet support rate by chalking up achievements, such as additional economic measures. For this very reason, the sudden resignation announcement is seriously disconcerting. Criticism has been voiced that "Mr. Ozawa needs to give a proper explanation on issues relating to politics and money." (New Komeito Secretary General Kazuo Kitagawa)

For now, moves relating to the election of the new DPJ president and the stance of the party's new leadership will have to be watched. Former LDP secretary general Koichi Kato voices alarm that, "The harder Mr. Ozawa worked (as the president), the better it would have been for the LDP. We need to be careful. There will be growing interest in the DPJ's presidential election, and the people's attention may move to the DPJ."

If there is internal strife in the DPJ, the scenario of early Diet dissolution, after the enactment of the supplementary budget in late May, will be possible. However, former LDP secretary general Bunmei Ibuki expresses a negative view: "Mr. Aso is not thinking of such a petty thing as taking advantage of the other side's troubles to dissolve the Diet."

What happens next will depend on how the DPJ deals with Diet affairs. The government and the ruling bloc are considering a substantial extension of the current Diet session until July to allow the passage of important bills, including bills related to the supplementary budget and the anti-piracy law. Since New Komeito is also strongly opposed to the dissolution of the Diet and a general election around the time of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election on July 12, the likely choice of date for dissolution will be some time after the Emperor and Empress return from their visit to Canada and Hawaii on July 17.

In that case, voting for the House of Representatives election is expected to take place in August, close to the end of the term of office of Lower House members. If the DPJ makes a forceful comeback

as a party by then, Aso's Diet dissolution may end up being something that he is forced into doing.

Certain people in the ruling parties are concerned about such an eventuality. During a program broadcast on CS television on the evening of May 11, former prime minister Shinzo Abe said: "After the passage of the supplementary budget, the prime minister will have a free hand in dissolving the Diet. It will be better for the LDP to hold an election by making a decision at a certain point, rather than doing it at the end of the term of office," touching on his preference for dissolution at an early date.

(2) Scope column: Will DPJ choose Okada or Hatoyama for new party head? Will new president make reforms or maintain conventional policy?

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
May 12, 2009

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With Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa's announcement of his resignation, the focus now is on who will be elected as the new DPJ president. Many junior and mid-level DPJ members are calling for DPJ Vice President Katsuya Okada to run in the party leadership election. Some lawmakers are looking into the possibility of backing DPJ Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama, who has supported Ozawa. If the presidential election ends up being a contest between Okada and Hatoyama, whether the present party structure and policy are reformed or maintained will be a point at issue in order to bring about a change in government.

Regarding Ozawa's resignation, Okada, who is regarded as the front-runner to replace Ozawa, said yesterday: "(Ozawa) made a significant decision. The question is who can bring about a change in government." Asked about whether he would file his candidacy, Okada responded: "I'm considering it." This seemed to be a rather specific reply for Okada, who tends to be cautious.

DPJ lawmakers close to Okada predict that he is certain to run in the election, with one member saying: "He has been determined to run." Another said: "I will urge him to file his candidacy." There are many members supporting Okada in the group led by Vice President Seiji Maehara and the other group led by Public Relations Committee Chairman Yoshihiko Noda. In addition, Okada has cross-sectional support in the DPJ.

As head of the party's political reform promotion taskforce, Okada played a leadership role in consolidating views in the party on banning donations from corporations and organizations and restricting candidates from running for the Diet seats held by their relatives. Since Ozawa has suffered a defeat caused to the issue of "politics and money," many DPJ members believe that Okada, who has a clean image, is the most suitable person to reform the party with an eye on the upcoming Lower House election.

Premised on Okada's assumption of the presidency, a mid-level lawmaker said: "In June, our party will concentrate on whether to renew our manifesto." The lawmaker means that since Okada has distanced himself from Ozawa, he may reform the party's conventional policies and structure.

Therefore, some of the DPJ members favoring the troika system made up of Ozawa, Hatoyama, and Deputy President Naoto Kan, along with its policies, are looking into the possibility of Hatoyama succeeding Ozawa. This is because Hatoyama backed Ozawa even after the discovery of the illegal donation scandal involving Ozawa's secretary.

Hatoyama told the press corps yesterday in a strong tone that he would step down from his post along with Ozawa. Regarding the possibility of his running in the party leadership race, he just said: "Since I have just heard about the president's intention to leave his post, I have no idea about my future right now."

Hatoyama has repeatedly said that he has a joint responsibility with

Ozawa and shares his fate. Therefore, if Hatoyama runs in the election, he will unavoidably meet with strong reactions from lawmakers supporting Okada.

Ozawa said that he would resign to ensure party unity. However, there is even a possibility that his resignation will develop into a

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generational conflict between a group of lawmakers calling for a generational change and another group that favors maintaining the present party structure.

(3) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

YOMIURI (Page 8) (Full)
May 11, 2009

Questions & Answers
(Figures shown in percentage)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 28.7
No 59.7
Other answers (O/A) 1.8
No answer (N/A) 9.8

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question)
Pick only one from among the following reasons for your approval of the Aso cabinet.

Something can be expected of its policy measures 25.0
The prime minister has leadership 9.7
There's something stable about the prime minister 11.0
His cabinet's lineup is good 11.6
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 32.4
O/A 3.6
N/A 6.8

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the foregoing question) Pick only one from among the following reasons for your disapproval of the Aso cabinet.

Nothing can be expected of its policy measures 37.2
The prime minister lacks leadership 21.3
There's nothing stable about the prime minister 23.4
His cabinet's lineup is not good 2.8
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 13.9
O/A 0.8
N/A 0.6

Q: Which political party do you support now?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 26.8
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 23.4
New Komeito (NK) 4.4
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2.4
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 0.8
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.1
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) ---
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) ---
Other political parties ---
None 39.2
N/A 2.9

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

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Prime Minister Aso 40.1
DPJ President Ozawa 24.8

N/A 35.1

Q: The government has presented the Diet with its supplementary budget of the largest scale ever to fund an additional economic stimulus package. Do you appreciate it?

Yes 41.0
No 47.9
N/A 11.2

Q: DPJ President Ozawa's secretary has been indicted for allegedly receiving illicit donations. Meanwhile, DPJ President Ozawa has clarified his intention to stay on as party head. Is this convincing?

Yes 21.8
No 71.1
N/A 7.1

Q: Do you think DPJ President Ozawa has fulfilled his accountability on the case this time?

Yes 6.7
No 86.7
N/A 6.6

Q: The new type of influenza is spreading. Do you think the government is dealing with this situation in an appropriate manner?

Yes 80.1
No 15.0
N/A 4.9

Q: Do you fear that someone you know may be infected with the new type of influenza?

Yes 27.9
No 69.8
N/A 2.2

Q: Are you or is your family doing something against the new type of influenza this time?

Yes 36.8
No 63.1
N/A 0.1

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question). Pick anything you or your family is doing.

Wear a mask when going out 42.8
Wash hands well 96.0
Try to keep away from crowded places 63.4
Keep masks and medicines 50.1
Keep foodstuffs 26.0
Gather information through newspapers, TV, etc. 81.2
O/A 0.8
N/A 0.1

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Q: Do you think the House of Representatives should be dissolved for a general election right away, or do you otherwise think there's no need to hurry?

Right away 34.1
No need to hurry 55.9
N/A 10.0

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of Representatives, which political party would you like to vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 26.5
DPJ 30.2

NK 5.0
JCP 3.6
SDP 1.2
PNP 0.2
RC ---
NPN ---
Other political parties 0.1
Undecided 24.4
N/A 8.8

Q: What form of government would you like to see after the next election for the House of Representatives?

LDP-led coalition government 15.0
DPJ-led coalition government 17.4
LDP-DPJ grand coalition government 22.9
Government under new framework after political realignment 38.7
O/A 0.0
N/A 6.0

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted May 8-10 across the nation on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Households with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,779. Valid answers were obtained from 1,091 persons (61.3 PERCENT).

(Note) In some cases, the total percentage does not become 100 PERCENT due to rounding.

(4) Poll on citizen judge system

YOMIURI (Page 23) (Full)
May 3, 2009

Questions & Answers
(Figures shown in percentage)

Q: What was your impression of court rulings handed down on incidents and accidents in criminal trials? Pick only one from among those listed below.

Often felt too heavy 4.3
Often felt too light 49.7
Often felt appropriate 34.0
No answer (N/A) 12.0

Q: The citizen judge system will start May 21. This system is for people selected by drawing lots to participate in criminal court trials on such major cases as murder and decide on whether guilty or

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not and punishment with the court judges. To what extent do you know this system? Pick only one from among those listed below.

Know well 4.1
Know somewhat 44.7
Know at least its name 42.9
Know nothing 7.5
N/A 0.9

Q: The citizen judge system mandates people to participate in a court trial. Do you support introducing this system?

Yes 13.9
Yes to a certain degree 20.1
No to a certain degree 31.5
No 30.3
N/A 4.1

Q: Would you like to participate in a court trial as a citizen judge?

Yes 18.1
No 79.2
N/A 2.7

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the foregoing question) Why?

Pick as many reasons as you like from among those listed below, if any.

Because I'm not confident in accurate judgment on whether guilty or not 50.1

Because I'm not confident in judgment on appropriate punishment 52.5

Because I feel reluctant to try someone 51.4

Because I'm worried about incurring resentment from the accused or those having something to do with the accused 16.5

Because it's troublesome to get involved in a case 16.3

Because I cannot take time due to my job or family circumstances 31.7

Other answers (O/A) 3.3

Nothing in particular (NIP) 1.5

N/A 0.8

Q: Anyone selected as a candidate to become a citizen judge is not allowed to decline unless there is some special reason. Do you think the candidate should be allowed to decline as much as possible?

Yes 72.0

No 23.3

N/A 4.7

Q: Most court trials involving citizen judges are expected to be held for an intensive period of 3 to 5 days. What do you think about this period of time if you were to become a citizen judge? Pick only one from among those listed below.

It can be longer 23.7

It should be shorter 20.8

It's appropriate 43.1

N/A 12.4

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Q: In a court trial, a dead body or other cruel photos may be shown as proofs. Do you think it's all right to see such photos if you were to become a citizen judge?

Yes 36.9

No 60.8

N/A 2.3

Q: If you were to become a citizen judge, do you choose capital punishment when you think capital punishment is appropriate for the case you judge?

Yes 62.5

No 23.1

N/A 14.3

Q: In criminal cases subject to the citizen judge system, the prosecutors and police are now beginning to record or video-tape some of their interrogations. This is for citizen judges to check to see if their interrogations were done in an appropriate manner. But there is also an opinion noting that the suspect can hardly tell the truth. Do you think the interrogations of suspects should be recorded and video-taped in a positive way?

Yes 73.2

No 16.1

N/A 10.7

Q: How do you think Japan's criminal trials will change after the citizen judge system starts? Pick as many as you like from among those listed below if any.

Easy to see court trials 22.7

Feel court trials closely 38.1

Public sensitivity will be reflected in court rulings 37.3

Court rulings will be affected by sentiment 37.8

Court trials will be careless 12.3

Court rulings will vary with cases 40.2

O/A 0.6

NIP 7.5

N/A 3.9

Q: Do you think Japan's criminal court trials will improve or worsen on the whole after the citizen judge system starts?

Improve 12.9

Improve to a certain degree 35.3

Worsen to a certain degree 18.7

Worsen 8.2

N/A 24.9

Q: Do you think the capital punishment system should be maintained or abolished?

Maintain 56.7

Maintain to a certain degree 23.8

Abolish to a certain degree 8.5

Abolish 5.7

N/A 5.3

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Polling methodology

Date of survey: April 25-26.

Subjects of survey: 3,000 persons chosen from among all eligible voters throughout the country (at 250 locations on a stratified two-stage random-sampling basis).

Method of implementation: Door-to-door visits for face-to-face interviews.

Number of valid respondents: 1,810 persons (60.3 PERCENT)

Breakdown of respondents: Male-49 PERCENT , female-51 PERCENT ; persons in their 20s-10 PERCENT , 30s-15 PERCENT , 40s-17 PERCENT , 50s-21 PERCENT , 60s-22 PERCENT , 70 and over-15 PERCENT ; big cities (Tokyo's 23 wards and government-designated cities)-23 PERCENT , major cities (with a population of more than 300,000)-18 PERCENT , medium-size cities (with a population of more than 100,000)-24 PERCENT , small cities (with a population of less than 100,000)-23 PERCENT , towns and villages-12 PERCENT .

(Note) In some cases, the total percentage does not become 100 PERCENT due to rounding.

(5) Key to U.S.-DPRK dialogue nowhere in sight; Bosworth arrives in Japan; North Korea remains mulish

ASAHI (Page 7) (Full)

May 12, 2009

Yusuke Murayama, Toru Higashioka, and Yoshihiro Makino in Seoul

U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth arrived in Japan yesterday on the last leg of his Asia tour which also took him to China and South Korea. A meeting with Foreign Ministry Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Director-General Akitaka Saiki completed the major events in Bosworth's Asia tour that followed North Korea's missile launch (on April 5). Although Bosworth seems set to respond to North Korea's call for direct dialogue with the United States, Pyongyang maintains its tough stance, as seen in its criticism that specifically mentioned the Obama administration by name. The United States has yet to find a way out of the deadlock.

Bosworth arrived in Tokyo after visiting Beijing and Seoul. During the talks, Bosworth and Saiki confirmed a policy direction to deal calmly with North Korea which has repeatedly carried out provocative acts, such as an announcement to withdraw from the Six-Party Talks and an indication to conduct a nuclear test, since firing the missile in April in the name of a satellite.

Bosworth's Asia tour, however, did not necessarily produce results that are directly linked to a way out.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton indicated that the North has taken provocative steps because it was shocked by the endorsement by China and Russia of a UN Security Council presidential statement condemning the North's missile launch. During his Asia tour, Bosworth noted that the United States was prepared to deal with North Korea bilaterally in a way that reinforces the multilateral process, while aiming to build up cooperation among the five countries excluding North Korea that was strengthened in the process of adopting the presidential statement. At the same time, Bosworth said: "The United States is prepared to deal with North Korea bilaterally in a way that reinforces the multilateral process." The special representative apparently searched for common ground to meet

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the North's desire for direct dialogue.

The North still takes a pigheaded attitude. A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman criticized the Obama administration by name on May 8, the day Bosworth arrived in Seoul. He reiterated Pyongyang's past assertion that it would further strengthen its nuclear deterrent, rejecting dialogue. It is clear that the North wants to elicit advantageous conditions from the United States. Asked about concrete measures by the press, Bosworth simply said, "The door to dialogue remains open," signaling the lack of a silver bullet.

Although it advocates dialogue, the United States is not in a condition to easily provide a 'carrot' as a reward. Saddled with tough diplomatic issues, such as the problem of Afghanistan and Pakistan where security is deteriorating, U.S. Congress slammed the government's response to North Korea's series of provocative acts as weak-kneed.

The view on direct dialogue varies from government to government. A South Korean government official said: "At present, chances are slim for the North to respond to a call for dialogue." He also noted that as a result of talks with the United States, a decision was made to consider different timing.

The Japanese government revealed a plan to endorse dialogue between the United States and North Korea on the condition that Japan and South Korea hold prior consultations and that the abduction issue is taken up. After the meeting with Bosworth yesterday, Saiki underlined the need to continue pursuing the dialogue and pressure approach before the press, saying: "It would be inadvisable to present concessions and a 'carrot' for the sake of an early resumption of the talks."

(6) Young Obama's visit to Japan: footprints in "only atomic-bombed country"

TOKYO SHIMBUN (page 2) (Full)
May 11, 2009

Yoichi Toyoda

Obama is the first African-American to become president in U.S. history. In early April, he became the first U.S. president to admit the moral responsibility of the first country to have actually used a nuclear weapon by dropping nuclear bombs on Japan. A visit by the U.S. president to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which has never happened before, has suddenly become a focus of attention. Actually, Obama has set foot on Japan before with his mother as a young boy. What did the young lad think of Japan at that time? This article looks back on Obama's past and examines the possibility of his visiting the atomic-bombed areas.

In 1967, a young boy came to Japan. He was Barack Obama, who later became the 44th president of the United States. He was here with his mother Anne on their way to Jakarta, where his Indonesian step-father lived.

At that time, Indonesia was in the process of the transition of power from Sukarno to Suharto. Obama must have been full of anxiety, having to face life with a new father in a strange land shaken by political change. At the same time, young Obama engraved his memories of Japan in his mind.

His book "Dreams from My Father" describes his three-day stay in Japan as follows:

"We visited the Great Buddha in Kamakura in the cold rain. I ate green-tea ice cream on the ferry gliding on the lake at the foot of the mountain."

Keio University Professor Yasushi Watanabe, who is well-versed in American politics, surmises that, "At that time, many Japanese people lived in Hawaii. Japan was something familiar to Obama. He was probably able to accept Japan naturally, and did not treat it as a distant country."

Obama later became a community activist in Chicago, Illinois, went on to serve in the Illinois state and federal senates, and won the presidential election in 2008. Subsequently, he appointed former first lady Hillary Clinton, his rival in the Democratic Party primaries, as secretary of state.

After Clinton chose Japan as the first country she would visit after assuming office, Obama ordered her to visit Indonesia as well. This was the same route young Obama took 42 years ago.

"As the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act."

This was what Obama said in a speech he delivered on April 5, while on a visit to Prague

Past presidents had never admitted the "moral responsibility of a country that has used nuclear weapons" in an America where the prominent opinion is that the atomic bombs brought the war to an early end. Obama's statement has suddenly raised hopes for the U.S. president to visit the atomic-bombed areas.

There had been proposals to visit the atomic-bombed areas in the past. When George W. Bush was president, he said in an interview with the Japanese media that this was an "interesting proposal," but the visit never materialized. The most senior U.S. official to have visited the atomic-bombed areas is House of Representatives speaker Nancy Pelosi, who visited Hiroshima in September 2008.

In reaction to the Prague speech, Prime Minister Taro Aso wrote a personal letter to Obama proposing "collaboration with the United States on nuclear disarmament," which he gave to former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to deliver.

When Abe handed the prime minister's personal letter to Vice President Joseph Biden, he inquired about the possibility of the President's visit to the atomic-bombed areas. With this, the visit has become an item on the political agenda rather than just a proposal.

Obama is expected to visit Japan in November this year for the first time as president. Will the visit to the atomic-bombed areas take place while he is in office? Watanabe says:

"I think it is possible if we are able to explain adequately that the visit will benefit Japan-U.S. relations and enhance the United States' prestige, and if we are able to gain non-partisan support."

(7) While Putin is in Japan, Japan intends to grope for Russia's real intention on Northern Territories, Russia expected to prioritize signing nuclear power agreement

days starting today to meet Prime Minister Taro Aso tomorrow. Aso and President Dmitry Medvedev agreed in their meeting in February to resolve the Northern Territories issue through a new, creative and unconventional approach. In the meeting, Aso intends to seek out Putin's real intention on the territorial issue. But Putin is unwilling to hold an in-depth discussion on the territorial issue. Given this, economic cooperation, including the signing of a nuclear power accord, is likely to take center stage in the Aso-Putin meeting.

Putin made three visits in the capacity of president, but this is the first Japan visit since he assumed office as prime minister last year.

Responding to an interview with foreign news companies held before leaving for Japan, Putting clearly said: "I will place emphasis on economic and trade issues." The Russian government has placed emphasis particularly on signing a nuclear power agreement, which is premised on exports of nuclear materials and technologies for civilian use. Russia has the goal of establishing 26 nuclear power plants by 2030. The Russian government expects to introduce Japanese companies' technologies in this project, as Energy Security Center Head Borovkov (TN: phonetic) said: "The process from designing to completion takes as many as six years in Russia but only four years in Japan."

Putin is also scheduled to deliver a lecture in a forum that will bring together business leaders from Japan and Russia tomorrow. His delegation includes four economic ministers, including the energy minister, and business leaders. Russia has been calling on Japanese firms to participate in its projects, such as constructing a gas pipeline stretching from Khabarovsk to Vladivostok and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility.

Meanwhile, Government Representative Shotaro Yachi, an advisor to Prime Minister Aso on foreign policy, said in April: "The return of 3.5 islands (instead of the return of the four Russian-controlled islands) would be acceptable." Because this remark caused the conjecture that Japan was taking a flexible stance, the Japanese government busily ran around to deny the conjecture, emphasizing no change in its conventional stance of seeking the return of the four islands.

Japan intends to ascertain what move the Russian side will make, following Aso's meeting with President Dmitri Medvedev in February, with a senior Foreign Ministry official saying: "The ball is now in the Russian court."

Even so, Prime Minister Putin has said: "The president is responsible for diplomatic issues. I cannot make any comment before the Japanese government determines its stance." Given this, the dominant view among persons concerned is that progress is unlikely on the territorial issue in the Aso-Putin meeting.

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(8) Putin to visit Japan on May 11; Japan, Russia to sign nuclear cooperation deal

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)
May 8, 2009

Ryosuke Endo, Moscow

The outlook is that Japan and Russia will sign a nuclear cooperation agreement when Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Japan on May 11. The accord will be a legal framework for the two countries to transfer nuclear materials. This was revealed on May 7 by sources connected to Japan-Russia relations. After concluding the accord, Japan intends to entrust Moscow with uranium enrichment and the re-enrichment of spent uranium fuel. Japan-Russia relations will likely reach a new stage in which Japan will increase its dependence on Russia through the nuclear pact, without seeing any progress on the dispute over the four Russia-held islands off Hokkaido.

The nuclear agreement will become a prerequisite for the transfer of

nuclear materials and technology for peaceful use. Japan has concluded such a pact with seven countries and organizations, including the United States. Tokyo has carried out negotiations with Moscow since April 2007. The pact stipulates that the military use of nuclear materials and technology is banned. It also stipulates that the preservation place of nuclear materials should be limited to facilities that have accepted inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Russia has 40 PERCENT of the enriched uranium in the world. It is believed that Russia holds enormous potentials for technology and facilities. Japan intends to entrust Russia with the enrichment of uranium that it will purchase from Kazakhstan, with the world second-largest uranium reserves, so that it will gain a new nuclear fuel supply source. Tokyo has also a notion of creating a new nuclear fuel cycle, including Russia, after paving the way for the re-enrichment of recovered uranium stored in Britain and France.

On the other hand, Russia is interested in nuclear reactor production technologies of such heavy electric machinery makers as Toshiba.

Japan, the only atomic-bombed country, has considered from the start strict inspections by the IAEA a prior condition for a nuclear cooperation deal. In Russia, however, there was resistance mainly in the military against the acceptance of IAEA inspections. Russia is the only country among the five nuclear powers that does not allow the IAEA to conduct inspections. For this reason, there is a possibility that the scope of Japan-Russia nuclear cooperation will be limited, depending on negotiations between Russia and the IAEA. On alert for a possible outflow of secret information and technologies to Japan, the Europe and the United States, many in the Russian government have been against the nuclear pact. There is also a possibility that the signing of the agreement will be forgone.

According to the Interfax, Yuri Ushakov, Putin's deputy chief of staff, referring to Putin's Japan visit at a press conference on May 7, said that Putin was "ready to discuss the territorial issue," but Japan should not have "excessive expectations."

(9) Reformist gives in to public opinion

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ASAHI (Page 3) (Abridged slightly)
May 12, 2009

Toru Hayano, columnist at head office

Ichiro Ozawa, who was once in the center of government administration and undertook political revolt at other times, stumbled when he was about to bring about a change in government. He has survived a number of setbacks with a keen sense of power inherited from Kakuei Tanaka, his mentor. However, he has now given in to a public that has been distancing itself from him, detesting money politics.

Japanese politics for the past two decades can be termed Ozawa-era politics. Ozawa, while putting up political reform as his policy slogan, has always been in turbulent political situations whether he was in a ruling party or in an opposition party. A senior Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) official, who once was Ozawa's close aide, said, "Mr. Ozawa is indifferent to daily politics. He becomes active only in an abnormal situation."

He grew up as a politician under the wing of Kakuei Tanaka, who can be called one of the leading postwar political figures. Tanaka drilled his organized election strategy into Ozawa. He was a favorite with Shin Kanemaru and became the Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) secretary general when he was 47 years old. He was a prince in the Tanaka-Takeshita faction, when it was in full power. If he had remained in the LDP, he might have become prime minister sooner or later.

However, Ozawa broke away from the LDP, advocating political reform. His defeat in a struggle to succeed to the Takeshita faction is not

the only reason why he bolted from the LDP. Tanaka was arrested with his shady financial dealings exposed in connection with the Lockheed scandal. Kanemaru evaded paying a huge amount of taxes and hid gold ingots. At that time, Japan became panic-stricken in the face of the Gulf war. Since there had never been a change in government under the 1955 political structure, politicians tilted toward money politics and retreated to safe politics. Ozawa's "Blue Print for a New Japan" captured the challenges posed by such an era.

Ozawa in 1993 set up non-LDP coalition administration led by Morihiro Hosokawa, using his "strong arm" and succeeded in introducing a single-seat constituency. However, because of his "strong arm," he was defeated by the LDP-Socialist Party-Sakigake administration's maneuvering, causing many of his close aides to leave him. It is unforgettable that when he all of a sudden disbanded the New Frontier Party (Shinshintō), Katsuya Okada protested against him at a plenary meeting, "This is a coup d'état. This is a breach of faith against voters."

Ozawa's displayed dexterity in power struggles. He has never given up even when he found himself in a shaky situation. Even when he was in such a situation, he built a new battle line and gathered himself up, by expanding the battlefield.

When the writer asked former Upper House member Sadao Hirano, Ozawa's close aide, whether the objective of Ozawa's politics was not policy but power struggle itself, he replied, "It is true that you cannot do anything unless you take over the reins of government." Ozawa, who has continued to advocate a change in government, might have been a revolutionary who attempts to bring

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about change after taking over power.

However, the political donations scandal caused by Nishimatsu Construction Co. evoked Kakuei Tanaka's money politics. Massive donations by a specific construction company recalled the memory of Kakuei Tanaka's money politics. Supreme Advisor to the DPJ Kozo Watanabe, who has been with Ozawa since 1969, when they both were elected to the Diet for the first time, said, "Since the single-seat constituency system was introduced, election costs were cut from the 100 million yen level to 10 million yen level. I don't know why Mr. Ozawa is trying to collect such a large amount of money."

Ozawa might have tried to get by the scandal this time in the same way as in the past. There is criticism of public prosecutors' investigation method. However, even if he can tide over criticism from political circles with a power game, he can no longer stop people from being put off by money politics.

(10) DPJ leader Ozawa steps down to avoid being covered with flames in party head talks, according to pundits' analysis

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 22) (Full)
May 12, 2009

Ichiro Ozawa suddenly announced his resignation as Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) president in a hastily called press conference yesterday. Before making the decision, Ozawa had said: "I am determined to thoroughly fight the prosecution;" and, "I do not mind stepping down in order to realize a change in government." In the press conference, however, he gave no clear explanation about why he decided to resign. Why now? Who is considered to be an ideal successor to Ozawa? Will the situation turn around? The Tokyo Shimbun asked pundits for their views about questions the public are likely to have, such as the above-listed questions.

To a question of why Ozawa decided to resign at this timing, Harumi Arima, a political commentator, thinks that his strong awareness of the next general election was behind his decision. He said: "Hypothetically speaking, if the Lower House were dissolved today, political parties would need to immediately start preparations for an election. Now is the maximum limit for preparations for the next Lower House election."

Arima said: "I guess that he had to decide to reluctantly step down

after hearing a number of DPJ lawmakers complaining they would not be able to win the next election under Ozawa. The lawmakers were bearing in mind views expressed by voters in their electoral districts during the Golden Week holidays."

Prime Minister Aso and Ozawa were scheduled to hold bilateral talks on the 13th. Some observers see the plan for the meeting prompted Ozawa to decide to resign. Minoru Morita, a political commentator, said: "If party head talks were held, Ozawa would undoubtedly be severely attacked. He might have judged there would have no choice but to resign."

Rieko Zanna, a freelance producer, also takes the view that the plan for party head talks would have driven Ozawa into resignation, remarking: "In the party head talks, Prime Minister Aso was ready to take up various issues and grill him. President Ozawa might have given consideration to the future of the DPJ, rather than his own fate, at the very last moment."

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Hiroko Hagiwara, an economic journalist, categorically said:

"I have questions about why he decided to resign now. But this decision must be a positive factor for the people. ... In the next general election, a victory of the LDP by a narrow margin is the worst outcome for this country. Setting aside the question of the DPJ's capability, if the ruling coalition fails to obtain an absolute majority in the Lower House, the state of the divided Diet will become more serious than the present state, and eventually, the Diet will become stalled. Now that we are in a once-in-a-century critical state due to the global recession, it is undesirable to allow the Diet stalled."

Supporters in Iwate Constituency No. 4 left with hazy feeling

Supporters of Ozawa in Iwate Constituency No. 4, his electoral district, were watching Ozawa announcing his resignation (on the TV) with a regrettable look. Ichiro Chikura, a classmate of Ozawa in elementary and junior high school, grumbled: "It is truly regrettable, and I have been left with a hazy feeling. His resignation could be taken as his acknowledgement of (his responsibility for his secretary's arrest over a political funds scandal."

Expectations were growing for the first prime minister, following Zenko Suzuki, to be born in Iwate. But with Ozawa's resignation, this possibility vanished in the air. A former secretary to Ozawa has announced his candidacy on the LDP ticket in the next Lower House election from this constituency.

Chikura said:

"Since he (Ozawa) is pure, he should have had no desire to become prime minister. He has consistently called for a two-party system since he decided to leave the LDP. People are still calling for a regime change. I wanted him to take the leadership at such a juncture."

ZUMWALT